

Message Text

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-----053910 111914Z /64
O 111849Z AUG 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 203613

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CVIS, SREF, UR, US

SUBJECT: WALK-IN: PRESS GUIDANCE

REF: MOSCOW 19006

1. REUTERS MOSCOW HAS RUN FOLLOWING STORY RE WALK-IN:
2. "MOSCOW, AUG 11, REUTER - A SOVIET ARMENIAN WOMAN AND HER TWO YOUNG SONS STAGED A SIT-IN AT THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN MOSCOW TODAY AFTER SOVIET AUTHORITIES REFUSED HER PERMISSION TO TRAVEL TO THE UNITED STATES.
3. "ELIZA OBSTEPYAN, WHO HAS A SISTER IN LOS ANGELES, SAID SHE ENTERED THE EMBASSY LAST NIGHT AFTER BEING TOLD BY THE MOSCOW PASSPORT OFFICE THAT HER APPLICATION FOR AN EXIT VISA WAS TURNED DOWN.
4. "I'M STAYING HERE UNTIL THE SOVIET UNION LETS ME OUT TO
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SEE MY RELATIVES,' SHE SAID.

5. "MRS. OBSTEPYAN SAID US OFFICIALS INITIALLY TOLD HER THE EMBASSY WAS NOT A HOTEL, BUT THEY MADE NO MOVE TO PREVENT HER WHEN SHE DECIDED TO STAY.
6. "US DIPLOMATS HAVE SAID REPEATEDLY DURING THE

PENTECOSTALISTS' SIT-IN THAT THERE WAS VIRTUALLY NOTHING THEY COULD DO TO HELP.

7. "EMIGRANTS MUST HAVE SOVIET EXIT VISAS BEFORE THEY CAN LEAVE, NO MATTER WHETHER A FOREIGN COUNTRY HAS AGREED TO TAKE THEM. WESTERN DIPLOMATS REGULARLY HAVE TO CONTEND WITH SOVIET CITIZENS WHO MISTAKENLY BELIEVE THEY CAN USE EMBASSIES AS A STEPPING-STONE TOWARD EMIGRATION.

8. "AT THE FRENCH EMBASSY AN ARMENIAN SCIENTIST HAS BEEN REFUSING TO LEAVE THE BUILDING FOR SOME WEEKS WITHOUT AN ASSURANCE THAT HE COULD EMIGRATE.

9. "BUT SOVIET AUTHORITIES FINALLY GAVE FOUR VENEZUELAN-BORN BROTHERS PERMISSION TO LEAVE AFTER THEY STAGED A SIT-IN LAST MONTH AT THE VENEZUELAN EMBASSY."

10. DEPARTMENT PRESS OFFICE RECEIVED ONE QUERY RE WALK-IN MORNING OF AUGUST 11, BUT THERE WERE NO QUESTIONS AT NOON BRIEFING. FOLLOWING IS PRESS GUIDANCE WHICH HAD BEEN PREPARED FOR THAT BRIEFING:

11. "Q. CAN THE DEPARTMENT CONFIRM THAT A SOVIET WOMAN HAS ENTERED THE CONSULAR SECTION OF THE EMBASSY IN MOSCOW AND HAS THREATENED TO STAY THERE INDEFINITELY UNTIL SHE RECEIVES SOVIET PERMISSION TO EMIGRATE FROM THE USSR.
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12. "A. YES, ACCORDING TO REPORTS FROM OUR EMBASSY, A SOVIET WOMAN AND HER SEVEN-YEAR-OLD SON ENTERED THE EMBASSY AUGUST 10 AND EXPRESSED AN INTENTION TO REMAIN THERE. I HAVE NO MORE RECENT INFORMATION ON THIS MATTER." VANCE

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